

Charter school fires McPhail; Conservator named to bring school into legal compliance

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Body

Sharon McPhail was terminated from a Detroit **charter school** on Monday, the same day the **school's** authorizer appointed a **conservator** to bring the **school** into compliance with state law.

The Bay Mills Community College **Charter School** Office announced it appointed Nancy Berkompas as **conservator** for the Detroit Community **Schools**.

McPhail, an attorney and former general counsel for the city of Detroit, is the former superintendent of the **charter school**. A spokesman said McPhail was terminated Monday. McPhail was still listed as the **school's** chief administrative officer on its website Monday.

She was not immediately available for comment.

"Sharon McPhail's employment with DCS was terminated as of today. Her employment did not meet accreditation for superintendent. The **school** has not been able to secure financing. It was putting operations of the **school** into jeopardy," said Tom Shields, a spokesman for the Bay Mills Community College **Charter School** Office.

In 2016, the Michigan Department of Education ruled the **charter school** was employing a chief administrative officer who was not properly certified. MDE fined the **school** and ordered it to comply with state law, according to Shields.

The fines reached more than \$200,000 as the **school** appealed the ruling. The **school's** appeals have now been exhausted, according to Mickey Parish, president of Bay Mills Community College.

Last month, Bay Mills suspended the **school's** board. It will remain suspended until the **conservator's** work has been concluded, officials said.

"As a **charter school** authorizer, it is our responsibility to make sure our **schools** are operating in accordance with state laws," Parish said. "The **school's** refusal to bring its operation in compliance has now put the **school** in financial jeopardy. Our action today protects the students, their families and teachers and allows the **school** to continue operating without disruption."

Berkompas, a former teacher and **school** superintendent, is a governance specialist for the Bay Mills **charter school** office.

Officials said Berkompas' work will focus on bringing the **school** into compliance with state law by retaining a chief administrator with proper state certification, obtaining the proper financing that will allow the **school** to continue

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operations and addressing the penalties assessed by the state. The board will be reinstated once these issues have been fully addressed, Parish said.

The **charter school**, founded in 1997, serves more than 650 students in grades K-12 and is in the Brightmoor neighborhood. Bay Mills Community College oversees 46 **charter schools** serving more than 22,000 students.

jchambers@detroitnews.com

Graphic

McPhail

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